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Culture of peace

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Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the culture of peace in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 60/3, 60/10 and 60/11.

Summary

The present report, prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 60/3, entitled "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010", 60/10, entitled "Promotion of interreligious dialogue and cooperation for peace", and 60/11, entitled "Promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation". It follows the midterm global review of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, prepared by UNESCO (see A/60/279).

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I. Introduction

1. In September 2005, world leaders reaffirmed in the World Summit Outcome document the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace as well as the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations and its Programme of action adopted by the General Assembly. They underlined the value of different initiatives on dialogue among cultures and civilizations, including the dialogue on interfaith cooperation. The leaders committed themselves to taking action to promote a culture of peace and dialogue at the local, national, regional and international levels and requested the Secretary-General to explore implementation mechanisms and to follow up on those activities. In that regard, they also welcomed the Alliance of Civilizations initiative announced by the Secretary-General on 14 July 2005. Furthermore, the leaders underlined that sports can foster peace and development and can contribute to an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding.

II. Implementation of the Programme of action on a Culture of Peace

2. As the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been tasked with coordinating and directly implementing activities in connection with the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, the present report presents an overview of activities carried out by the organization, with the participation of other United Nations entities, Governments and civil society actors. It also contains an overview of activities reported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations University (UNU), the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Global Alliance of Civilizations relevant to General Assembly resolutions 60/3, 60/10 and 60/11. Those activities are presented in eight sections, corresponding to the eight areas of the Programme of action on a Culture of Peace.

A. Actions to foster a culture of peace through education

Culture of peace education activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

3. *Education for All — promoting international political commitment.* Within the Education for All (EFA) framework, UNESCO has been providing policy and decision makers with information about progress achieved against the six Dakar goals and targets, including the Millennium Development Goals for education, through the *EFA Global Monitoring Report* (2001, 2002, 2003/4, 2005, 2006), which also highlights effective policies and strategies, alerts the global community to emerging challenges and promotes international action and cooperation. UNESCO has been working to sustain international political commitment for EFA through the organization of the Working Groups on EFA, the EFA High-level Group (Brasilia, 2004; Beijing, 2005), the Ministerial Round Table on EFA (2005) and meetings of the nine high-population countries (E-9).

4. *Quality education*. Quality education is a major goal of EFA, and peace education is an integral part of it. It is a vehicle for dialogue, as it has the capability to raise awareness and promote the understanding of fundamental human rights, respect for the "other" and skills for creating and maintaining a culture of peace. UNESCO has been supporting Member States to integrate a holistic vision of quality education in their educational systems at all levels. This includes the development of textbooks and learning materials that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, both in formal and informal learning schemes of basic education; the setting up of databases on best practices, as well as the exchange of experiences; the development of science and technology education policies in higher education with the overall aim of contributing to poverty reduction; and the promotion of inter-university solidarity for development.

5. *Accelerating action to reach the EFA goals and the Millennium Development Goals*. To accelerate action towards assisting member States reach the six EFA goals and the Millennium Development Goals, UNESCO has created three core EFA initiatives: the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment seeks to achieve 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015 by anchoring literacy work in national development policies, life skills programmes and poverty reduction strategies at the national level; the Teacher Training Initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa to address the teacher shortage crisis in that region; and the Global Initiative on HIV/AIDS and Education (EDUCAIDS), in partnership with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, co-sponsoring organizations, donors, civil society and the private sector in order to scale up education action addressing HIV/AIDS through improved coordination, increased capacity and revitalized commitment at all levels.

6. *Inter-agency Peace Education Programme*. UNESCO, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) developed the Inter-agency Peace Education Programme, which consists of a set of 16 documents. The programme provides the life skills related to peace education and conflict minimization and prevention for refugee and returnee children, youth and the wider community. Peace education materials, including a formal and a non-formal education component and teacher training manuals, have been translated into local languages and sent to UNESCO field offices and to national commissions, as well as to UNHCR for distribution in refugee camps and to the INEE network.

Culture of peace education activities of the United Nations Children's Fund

7. *Peace education*. UNICEF programmes reflect the fact that education must seek to promote peace and tolerance and avoid fuelling hatred and suspicion. Specific activities took place in a number of countries in conflict or emerging from conflict, as well as in countries experiencing a large influx of refugees. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for instance, 6,000 teachers were trained in peace education. In addition, 2,645 children formerly associated with armed groups were reintegrated into 183 primary schools, 83 secondary schools and 30 non-formal education centres. With the Palestinian Authority, as part of a child-friendly school initiative, Sport for Development activities were initiated for 19,200 students in grades 5 to 7 in 65 schools. The following are some UNICEF-supported interventions that directly and indirectly are relevant for the promotion of a culture of peace:

- In Côte d'Ivoire, UNICEF developed a peace and tolerance curriculum with the Ministry of Education and supported training-of-trainers, benefiting more than 750,000 children
- Pilot projects were conducted in Kosovo (Serbia), southern Sudan, Somalia and Tajikistan to counter the use of small arms and light weapons among children and to build a culture of peace
- In Darfur, a peace dance in Wau Town takes place weekly allowing some 2,000 people from different communities to express their support for peace
- In Sierra Leone, adolescents have participated in the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and contributed to the Commission's recommendations, resulting in the child-friendly version of the Truth and Reconciliation Report
- The UNICEF Regional Office in West and Central Africa carried out a subregional workshop on transforming violent conflict and building peace and launched a two-year peacebuilding project to promote sustainable peace and stability in the West African subregion, by reinforcing the leadership capacity of youth and children's groups
- Schools are being promoted as "zones of peace" in which children can learn and develop, safe from violence and free from the presence of small arms and light weapons
- The resumption of specific education interventions are promoted in the UNICEF Core Commitments for Children, including a provision for conflict resolution within emergency education responses, following the initial six to eight-week period.

Culture of peace education activities of the United Nations University

8. *Peace and Governance Programme*. Through its Peace and Governance Programme, UNU, in collaboration with the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), initiated a book project to examine how leading religious teachings regard the justification of the use of force, with respect both to engagement in warfare and to just means of war. Researchers of various traditions — Christianity (Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant), Islam (Sunni and Shia), Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Shintoism — wrote chapters and met to exchange views and undertake an interreligious analysis, as a result of which a book will be published. The project presents the role of religious institutions and networks in fostering peaceful resolution of conflicts. The aim is to stimulate and enrich the interreligious dialogue and the dissemination of the end-results will feed into specific policymaking establishments. The project will inform policymakers and a broader audience about the genuine religious approaches to peace and war, and their misinterpretation and stigmatization for power-driven purposes. By doing so, it will advocate the strengthening of a culture of peace. UNU also joined the Hague Academic Coalition in publishing a book entitled *International Criminal Accountability and Children's Rights*, which examines whether the mechanisms of post-conflict justice meet the needs and rights of child victims and illustrates the development of child rights protection in international courts. It also gives examples of aggravated sentencing for crimes against children and advocates that a child-oriented approach needs to be further inserted into international accountability.

Culture of peace education activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

9. *Peace and Disarmament Education Programme.* UN-LiREC and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) designed a project on peace, disarmament and non-proliferation education, which includes the development of a course for policymakers and youngsters, the exchange of experiences and lessons learned among nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world and the preparation of audio-visual material on nuclear-weapon-free zones. It also entails close collaboration in the organization of a seminar to observe the fortieth anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco (Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean) in February 2007. Furthermore, UN-LiREC and its partners developed the "Weapons of Peace" publication, containing artwork by Argentine artists made from the remains of destroyed firearms and ammunition, which portrays how instruments and symbols of violence can be transformed into objects that transmit a message of harmony and sustenance of life.

10. *Supporting Peru's new Amnesty Law campaign.* In an effort to support Peru's new Amnesty Law No. 28684-06 campaign (23 July 2005-17 September 2006), UN-LiREC and its partners provided technical and financial support to the Peruvian Ministry of the Interior, which is working to regularize the status of firearms, ammunition and explosives possession throughout the country. Assistance included the production of visual and printed material, including television spot, video, documentary and radio announcements, as well as 10,000 posters. In addition, any illegal and/or decommissioned weapons collected through the campaign will be considered for destruction with the assistance of the United Nations and its partners. The Centre and its partners also supported an initiative in 2005 aimed at complementing Peru's celebration of its national day (28 July). The Centre worked with 5 municipalities and 61 schools, involving 2,500 children to design activities that raise awareness about the folklore and culturally inspired values of the country. The initiative is now projected to cover eight municipalities in the metropolitan Lima area and nine provinces.

Culture of peace education activities of the International Labour Organization

11. *Prevention and reintegration of children involved in armed conflict.* The ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO/IPEC) seeks to combat the use of children in armed conflict, as it is one of the worst forms of child labour. In 2003, an ILO/IPEC interregional programme on the "Prevention and Reintegration of Children Involved in Armed Conflict" was launched, which covers Burundi, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. The main objectives of the ILO/IPEC Interregional Child Soldier Project are: (a) create an enabling environment in each country, facilitating the prevention, withdrawal and subsequent reintegration into society of children involved in armed conflict; (b) support the reintegration of former child soldiers; and (c) prevent the recruitment of children into armed units. Last year, around 8,000 former child soldiers and/or vulnerable children at risk of being recruited were either reintegrated into society or were prevented from being recruited as child soldiers through the project. Young children are provided with literacy and numeracy classes and catch-up education, when needed, with the objective of mainstreaming them into the formal education system and older children receive

pre-vocational and vocational training to encourage and facilitate their economic reintegration into society.

12. *Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM).* ILO encourages the engagement of young people in building a culture of peace, social dialogue and a sense of active citizenship. In the framework of ILO/IPEC, a specific programme, Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM) was created to help teachers, educators and young people promote understanding of social justice issues as a basis for peace. The programme places emphasis on the use of visual, literary and performing arts and focuses on the social dimensions of globalization, human rights and child labour. Thousands of children worldwide — from primary to high school — are expressing their creativity through music and theatre performances, visual arts and canvases, photo exhibits, seminars, debates, interviews and academic projects that deepen their awareness while contributing to social change. The programme enhances cooperation and encourages dialogue between a wide range of partners, including the academic world, non-governmental organizations, municipalities, the artistic community and the media.

Culture of peace education activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

13. *Partnership on Education for Rural People (ERP).* FAO is leading the partnership on Education for Rural People (ERP), which is part of the International Alliance Against Hunger and of the Education for All (EFA) initiative. Both FAO and UNESCO are inviting member countries, international agencies and civil society to join this partnership, whose main objective is to foster national capacities to plan and implement ERP as part of National Education for All and Rural Development Plans. Education is an essential prerequisite for reducing poverty, improving agriculture and the living conditions of rural people and building a food-secure world. ERP focuses on the need to ensure and enable an environment conducive to poverty eradication, peace and food security. Its policy focuses on engaging Governments, in collaboration with civil society, to support investments in human resources, such as education, literacy and other skills training, which are essential to sustainable development.

B. Actions to promote sustainable economic and social development

Activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to promote sustainable and economic development

14. *Building human and institutional capacities.* Intellectual cooperation and dialogue among cultures and civilizations was fostered through specific approaches, such as in the area of water resources assessment and management through applied research, targeted at problems identified at regional levels. This included training courses on conflict and cooperation in transboundary river management in different regions and the preparation and sharing of best practices. Furthermore, activities were undertaken to promote exchanges between different traditional and local knowledge systems and knowledge holders, to engage young scientists and to focus on introducing dialogue components in science and engineering education, such as through the Mondialogo Engineering Award. The same kind of transboundary

cooperation was also promoted by the Man and Biosphere Programme for the management of shared ecosystems, through the biosphere reserve concept. Five transboundary biosphere reserves have been established in Europe and, more recently, two in Africa. Moreover, the powerful force of the basic sciences provided a platform for peaceful dialogue and collaboration, as exemplified by the SESAME (Synchrotron Radiation for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East) Project, a true "science for peace" project in the Middle East.

15. *United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014).* Education for Sustainable Development pursues the global vision of a world where everyone has the opportunity to learn the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and positive social change. UNESCO, as the United Nations system lead agency for the Decade, is coordinating the efforts of Governments, educators and students to integrate the theme of sustainable development in educational systems at all levels. In 2006, the organization organized the first meeting of the Inter-Agency Committee on the Decade to approve its terms of reference and identify joint areas of cooperation.

16. *Fresh water.* UNESCO continued to build its action on three pillars in the field of fresh water. The first is the International Hydrological Programme, which focuses on managing water interactions, including the impact of global change on the water cycle. National committees advised Governments on policy and management issues related to the programme, and cooperation was promoted among a network of 12 centres at the regional or international levels on different thematic aspects of fresh water of relevance to the programme. The second pillar is water education, carried out principally through the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education. Being among the largest graduate schools for water education in the world, UNESCO-IHE worked to fortify education and capacity-building for developing countries. The third pillar is the World Water Assessment Programme, a United Nations system programme involving 24 United Nations organizations and programmes for which UNESCO provides the secretariat lead, and which produces the World Water Development Report. In 2006, the secretariat published the second report.

17. *Oceans.* The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO is the ocean sciences and services focal point in the United Nations system, contributing to the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. IOC continued to support the sustainable development and assessment of oceans and coasts by improving the scientific understanding of the marine environment, setting international standards for the collection and open exchange of ocean data, and building the capacities of developing countries to use new knowledge and apply new tools. IOC continued to lead the implementation of the Global Ocean Observing System to assist the scientific community in addressing scientific uncertainties, particularly as regards climate change, and continued to coordinate the establishment of a tsunami warning system in the Indian Ocean.

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Activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean to promote sustainable and economic development

18. *Providing assistance to the United Nations Women's Guild — Peru.* UN-LiREC responded to a request to supply technical and financial assistance to the United Nations Women's Guild — Peru (UNWG) for the organization of the Guild's fourth annual fund-raising bazaar in November 2005. That assistance illustrates the first step in the Centre's strategic plan to identify peace, disarmament and development-related initiatives to be undertaken by both entities during the 2006-2007 period, which will build on previous work carried out by the Guild in Peru.

Activities of the United Nations Children's Fund to promote sustainable and economic development

19. *United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014).* UNICEF has been actively promoting the Decade, of which UNESCO is the United Nations system lead agency. UNICEF attended the Inter-agency Committee on the Decade and also participated in a meeting of experts on indicators. The organization continued to promote the Decade by working through its national committees in industrialized countries to promote Education for Development and to foster greater understanding of the needs of developing countries, both in terms of financial and capacity gaps.

C. Actions to promote respect for all human rights

Actions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to promote respect for all human rights

20. *Human rights education.* The specific objectives and framework for activities on human rights education are clearly laid out in the Plan of action for the first phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. UNESCO has been assisting member States in integrating various elements into all aspects of curriculums, learning materials and teaching methodologies within the social and cultural context of local and national educational systems. The organization has also been working with member States to weave those elements into the planning and implementation of non-formal education and all types of learning media, including information and communication technologies. The ultimate goal is to help communities access the knowledge, skills and channels of communication necessary to have a meaningful voice in an enlightened dialogue and to prevent the spread of violence based on misunderstanding and intolerance.

21. *Human security, peace and conflict prevention.* To strengthen human security, the organization launched 26 intersectoral projects on the eradication of poverty, especially extreme poverty, which have a direct impact on vulnerable populations in the countries where the projects are running and are examples of strengthened cooperation between UNESCO and other United Nations agencies, in particular UNICEF and UNDP, as well as a number of non-governmental organizations. The organization has also been working with the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on the elaboration and validation of ethical, normative and educational frameworks for the promotion of human security and the prevention of conflict through various research, training and

expert forums in Africa, the Arab States and South-East Asia. The organization has also been following up, through networking and pilot projects, on the frameworks that have been defined for Central Asia, East Asia and Latin America.

Actions of the United Nations Children's Fund to promote respect for all human rights

22. *Human rights-based approaches to programming.* UNICEF is committed to human rights-based approaches to programming and is working with UNESCO to develop a framework for the realization of children's rights in education. A workshop was organized with the support of the UNICEF Regional Office in Panama in November 2005. UNESCO actively participated and outlined the parameters of the framework. In May 2006, a first version of the resulting document was discussed at a global consultation, organized jointly by UNICEF and UNESCO at the Fund's Innocenti Research Centre, in Florence, Italy. The final version will be available in September 2006. The document brings together the current thinking and practice on a rights-based approach in the education sector and is intended as a conceptual and programming tool. It is going to be disseminated to countries and development partners for guidance on policy, planning and programme implementation in the field of basic education. This falls within the two agencies' objectives of achieving Education for All and attaining the education-related Millennium Development Goals on universal primary education and gender equality.

23. *Child-friendly school (CFS) initiatives.* Child-friendly school (CFS) initiatives, spearheaded by UNICEF, mainstream human rights into education in a number of Asian, Latin American and African countries, emphasizing that education is an entitlement (as opposed to a need). CFS initiatives demonstrate the urgency for a paradigm shift to a more inclusive approach, one that looks at education from the perspective of responsibility rather than mere utility.

24. *Global Study on Violence against Children.* The Global Study on Violence against Children is rooted in a child's right to protection from all forms of violence and aims to promote action to prevent and eliminate violence against children at international, regional, national and local levels. This United Nations-led collaboration draws together existing research and relevant information about the forms, causes and impact of violence, which affects children and young people (up to the age of 18 years). The Study report will be published and recommendations presented to the United Nations General Assembly in October 2006. The report will contain findings and recommendations within five "settings" in which violence against children takes place — home and family, education, institutions, work and community.

Actions of the World Health Organization to promote respect for all human rights

25. *Global Campaign for Violence Prevention.* In the last 10 years, WHO has devoted substantial attention to addressing violence as a major public-health problem, particularly through the Global Campaign for Violence Prevention, which provides a platform for violence prevention activities in order to raise awareness about the problem of violence, highlight the crucial role that public health can play in addressing its causes and consequences and encourage action at every level of

society. In October 2005, WHO and The California Wellness Foundation hosted the Second Milestones of a Global Campaign for Violence Prevention meeting in San Francisco, United States of America, where more than 150 violence prevention experts from around the world met to discuss progress achieved in implementing the *World Report on Violence and Health*, launched by WHO in October 2002.

D. Actions to ensure equality between women and men

Activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to promote equality between women and men

26. *Gender mainstreaming*. Gender equality is being promoted through gender mainstreaming throughout all programmes and all stages of UNESCO activities. The organization requires gender mainstreaming training for all professional staff to enhance staff knowledge of and programmatic response to gender equality issues in UNESCO domains by (a) targeting professional staff at all levels, including senior management; (b) aiming at building the capacity of staff to undertake gender analysis; and (c) urging staff to apply gender analysis to both policy formulation and programmatic work. The training was launched in September 2005. Training workshops have been conducted for two programming sectors at UNESCO: education and culture. In December 2005, the first regional training took place in Dakar, with the participation of directors, education specialists and gender focal points from all sub-Saharan Africa field offices.

27. *Women's rights*. Gender equality and equal rights for women are being promoted through policy-oriented research, networking, advocacy and institution-building. UNESCO organized the conference on Empowering Women in the Great Lakes Region: Violence, Peace, and Women's Leadership, in Addis Ababa, from 30 May to 1 June 2005, which brought together policymakers, non-governmental organizations activists and academics from the Great Lakes region to discuss research, policy and activism towards women's empowerment. In addition, a programme of action is being implemented to empower women in the Great Lakes region, which includes the establishment of a Women's Research and Documentation Centre in Kinshasa and of women's studies programmes in universities in Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

28. *Promoting women in scientific research*. UNESCO has been promoting women's participation in scientific research through the L'Oréal-UNESCO Partnership For Women in Science. Since 1998, 42 L'Oréal-UNESCO Award laureates have been recognized for their careers and encouraged to pursue their scientific vocations. In addition, the programme of national fellowships has permitted 130 young women to pursue their scientific research.

29. *Gender and information and communication technology*. To provide women with equal access to information and communication technology and bridge the gender divide, UNESCO has been working to raise awareness on gender-related barriers to access to information and communication technology; to include women as leaders and decision makers; to facilitate better understanding of the needs and directions within the framework of gender and information and communication technology; to render assistance and support local solutions and content; and to take forward the commitments that were made at previous United Nations conferences

and summits, in particular the World Conferences on Women, held in Nairobi and Beijing.

Actions of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to ensure equality between women and men

30. *Partnership on Education for Rural People (ERP).* Through this partnership, FAO is working with Governments to develop or improve upon their education policies in order to ensure equal access to education for women, especially girls, since illiteracy is particularly high among rural girls and women. Education is vital in improving the status of women, significantly improving health and nutrition in rural areas, lowering child morbidity and mortality rates, and slowing population growth.

Actions of the World Health Organization to ensure equality between women and men

31. *WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence.* Violence against women is increasingly recognized as a major global public health problem. Recognizing the limited data about the magnitude and nature of the problem, as well as its underlying causes, the WHO Department of Gender, Women and Health launched the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence in November 2005 so that effective preventive strategies can be developed. The study, for which over 24,000 women were interviewed in 10 different countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Japan, Peru, Namibia, Samoa, Serbia and Montenegro, Thailand and the United Republic of Tanzania) found that physical and sexual violence is extremely common in women's lives and that intimate partner violence remains a hidden problem.

32. *Prevention against violence and gender discrimination.* Inspired by the WHO Global Campaign for Violence Prevention, the Brazilian city of Manaus recently launched its own campaign for violence prevention, which has resulted in a new violence prevention law that was passed in November 2005. That law designates that one week each year will be known as the Prevention against Violence and Gender Discrimination Week. The new campaign will publicize best practices and concepts for equal rights and establish a permanent forum on violence and discrimination prevention. The law also allows for the creation and provision of a new series of courses on violence and gender discrimination for all teachers, professors and city government staff.

Activities of the United Nations Children's Fund to promote equality between women and men

33. *United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI).* UNICEF is the lead agency for the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), which supports country-led development and seeks to influence decision-making and investments to ensure gender equity and equality in national education policies, plans and programmes. The UNGEI mission is central to building gender equality, social justice and economic development, all of which are essential to constructing and maintaining peace in societies. UNGEI is active in the Sudan, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Eritrea, Guinea, Rwanda, Thailand and Uganda, where active United Nations peacekeeping missions and United Nations peacebuilding efforts are under way.

E. Actions to foster democratic participation

Activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to foster democratic participation

34. *Assisting in the development of independent media.* UNESCO has been promoting democratic governance and citizenship participation in developing countries, in particular those in post-conflict situations, by: training journalists and media professionals, especially women journalists, in non-partisan and independent reporting techniques in conflict areas; supporting the establishment of the necessary conditions for independent media by providing expertise to national authorities that seek to adapt their media legislation to internationally recognized standards of freedom of expression, peace and tolerance; supporting the production and co-production of media programmes that promote peace, tolerance and mutual understanding in post-conflict areas; ensuring the security and safety of media professionals through training seminars and by regularly updating the practical guide for journalists working in conflict zones; and assisting media in covering elections as free and fair elections are essential for the consolidation of democracy and the prevention of conflict.

Activities of the United Nations Children's Fund to foster democratic participation

35. *Voices of Youth.* UNICEF is working to enable the participation of children whose voices are rarely heard, the most marginalized and vulnerable, such as poor, disabled children and girls. To strengthen the capacity of children and young people to participate in the decisions that affect their lives, UNICEF has continued to promote issues related to adolescent development and participation through its "Voices of Youth" (http://www.unicef.org/) Internet rights project. The online facility provides an opportunity for children and young people to learn about global issues, in particular in the light of how such issues may affect them worldwide, and share their views with others about how to take action in their own communities.

F. Actions to advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity

Actions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity

36. *Promoting cultural diversity and dialogue among cultures, civilizations and peoples.* Genuine dialogue is a specific behaviour, practice and dynamic process and one of the best tools against the threat of a clash of ignorances, meaning the ignorance of each other's way of life, values, language, history and heritage, the ignorance of the equal dignity of the human person in all civilizations and cultures, and the ignorance of the unity of humanity and of commonly shared values as a precondition for the maintenance of peace. In 2005, UNESCO consolidated its concrete and practical action in the area of the dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, including interfaith dialogue, through a specific focus on initiatives at the regional and subregional levels, the articulation of a set of commonly shared values and principles, thematic focus-building in its five domains, multi-stakeholder involvement, and dialogue as a vehicle for advancing women's human rights.

37. Several conferences and summits were held that focused on concrete and practical action in promoting the dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples. In May 2005, at the Summit of Heads of State of South-East Europe, held in Varna, Bulgaria, the Heads of State adopted the Varna Declaration, pledging to contribute to the promotion of cultural heritage and cultural corridors within the region, and to promote urgent measures for the protection of cultural heritage at risk within the region, including continuing action to counter the illicit traffic in cultural property. In June 2006, another summit of leaders from South-East Europe was held in Opatija, Croatia, which enabled experts to identify elements of cultural corridors and to explore the potential for enhanced cooperation within South-East Europe in order to promote a common European heritage. In June 2006, a regional African conference was held in Abuja that focused on the potential of education and science for the promotion of dialogue and concluded with the adoption of the Abuja Declaration on the Dialogue among Civilizations, Cultures and Peoples: The Pivotal Role of Education and Science.

38. Intercultural dialogue among young people was supported through the organization of a Youth Forum on "Young people and the dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples" held at UNESCO headquarters, from 30 September to 2 October 2005, in conjunction with the organization's General Conference. Young people from all regions participated in the event and their report was submitted and adopted at the thirty-third General Conference. UNESCO, in partnership with DaimlerChrysler, also encouraged intercultural dialogue among young people through the Mondialogo initiative, composed of a school contest, an engineering award and the intercultural Mondialogo Internet Portal.

39. Interreligious dialogue contributes to the broader dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples because it promotes dialogue between individuals and leaders of different religions, faiths and convictions with a view to increasing mutual knowledge about spiritual traditions and their underlying values. In line with the UNESCO "Roads of Dialogue" programme, the organization brought together religious figures from the monotheistic faiths in thematic meetings to analyse the complex issue of interfaith dialogue as a component of intercultural dialogue. A recent example is the conference on "Religion in Peace and Conflict: Responding to Militancy and Fundamentalism", held in Sydney, Australia, in April 2005, where experts from South-East Asia and the Pacific rim examined the roots of terrorism and the means to mediate tensions among communities.

40. UNESCO considers intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity to be inseparable and mutually dependent. The myriad cultural expressions, which reflect the wealth of imagination, knowledge and value systems, form the seedbed for a renewed dialogue leading to each person's integration and participation in society as a whole. The organization has been promoting cultural diversity by assisting member States in bolstering national cultural heritage legislation, policy and practices, by working to protect, rehabilitate and safeguard heritage through advocacy, capacity-building and standard setting and through the development of sustainable cultural industries.

Actions of the International Labour Organization to advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity

41. *ILO Youth Sport Programme*. Using sport for development and peacebuilding helps bridge cultures and eradicate stigmas between different people around the world. The ILO Youth Sport Programme links the development of youth skills, by addressing needs in the world of sport, with ILO training. Activities were conducted in El Salvador, Mozambique and Senegal for skills development, cooperatives and local socio-economic development.

42. *The ILO/Universitas Programme*. The ILO/Universitas Programme, a partnership programme between universities, public and private stakeholders and tripartite social partners, is collaborating with Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, United States of America, to establish a Student Leadership Training for Peace Programme in order to involve young people in peacebuilding efforts. The University of Turin, Italy, has also taken the initiative to develop a certificate on peacebuilding and youth skills development through sport to allow for the study of the challenges and opportunities surrounding sport.

Actions of the United Nations Children's Fund to advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity

43. *Unite for children. Unite against AIDS*. Successful work to prevent HIV/AIDS and mitigate its impact on organizations and systems requires a readiness to tackle gender and other forms of social inequality. Actions to protect people (including teachers and pupils) living with, or affected by, HIV/AIDS from stigma and discrimination are therefore crucial to any effort to combat the pandemic. UNICEF and partners, including UNAIDS co-sponsors, bilateral donors, non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations and civil society partners launched a global campaign in 2005 entitled "Unite for children. Unite against AIDS." The campaign focused on scaling up interventions to prevent new infections, help children affected by HIV/AIDS and ensure that children have a central place on the global HIV/AIDS agenda. Central to the campaign is preventing stigma and discrimination and instead promoting understanding and solidarity with children and adults infected or affected by the pandemic, in particular through interventions with children and adolescents in and out of school, and ensuring that life skills and caring, respect and understanding are transmitted alongside primary prevention interventions.

G. Action to support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge

Activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge

44. *Promoting freedom of expression*. UNESCO promotes freedom of expression and freedom of the press as a basic human right through sensitization and monitoring activities and fosters media independence and pluralism by providing advisory services on media legislation and sensitizing Governments, parliamentarians and other decision makers. In March 2005, the Executive Board of UNESCO adopted 174 EX/Decision 46 on respect for freedom of expression and respect for sacred beliefs and values, and religious and cultural symbols. It requests

the Director-General of UNESCO to strengthen the organization's programmes and actions, in its fields of competence, to fulfil its commitment towards mutual understanding and respect for all peoples' religious and cultural values, and freedom of expression, and to accelerate the implementation of the plan of action for the dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples with a view to creating a culture of peace and living together.

45. *Promoting universal access to information and knowledge.* The organization is working to reduce the digital divide and build inclusive knowledge societies. Through the Information for All Programme, the organization assisted member States in developing legal and policy frameworks to promote universal access to information. Action was also targeted to implement the outcomes of the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva, 2003, and Tunis, 2005). At the local level, UNESCO has been providing a gateway to participation in the global knowledge society, especially for women and youth, seeking to ensure that information, communication and knowledge become tools for the poor for improving their lives through its Community Multimedia Centre programme. Such centres combine community radio, run by the local people using local languages, with community telecentre facilities, such as computers linked to Internet and e-mail, phone, fax, and photocopying services. UNESCO has supported over 50 centres, including in Angola, the Great Lakes region in Africa, the Middle East, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan, which has contributed to peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Activities of the United Nations Children's Fund to support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge

46. UNICEF partnered with the International Federation of Football Association (FIFA) to emphasize the role of sport in addressing racism and violence in the 2006 FIFA World Cup. A simple game of football, celebrated in the World Cup, can bring people together who actively work against racism and discrimination. On the "Unite for Children, Unite for Peace" website, http://www.unicef.org/football, more information is provided about how individual children are overcoming difficult circumstances through the power of sport.

H. Actions to promote international peace and security

Actions of the United Nations Children's Fund to promote international peace and security

47. *Mine risk education.* UNICEF undertakes some form of mine-related actions in more than 30 countries around the world, including numerous mine risk education activities. Mine risk education plays an important role in supporting the access of communities to mine clearance and development resources and helps to build the confidence of local populations. In peacebuilding, mine risk education plays a role in supporting information exchanges between warring parties, advocating for compliance with different norms, facilitating access to communities and raising awareness. During the reporting period, mine risk education activities were undertaken in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nepal and Colombia. In December 2006, UNICEF and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining published a series of 12 guide

books on best practice in undertaking mine risk education programmes. Those guide books supplement in the International Mine Action Standards Mine Risk Education part of the International Mine Action Standards and were developed and managed by UNICEF. The guide books are intended to support the implementation of the standards and ensure a more predictable, effective and coordinated response to the mine problem.

48. *Landmine survivor assistance*. UNICEF supports landmine survivor assistance in three countries (Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation (Chechnya) and the Lao People's Democratic Republic). Support ranges from summer camps for children, training workshops on planning and prioritization of mine awareness, survivor assistance and advocacy, data analysis and victim assistance studies.

49. *Small arms proliferation and misuse*. UNICEF has played a key role in advocacy concerning children affected by armed conflict and the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of children in armed forces and other combatant groups in Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Indonesia, Liberia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, the Congo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, the Sudan and Uganda. UNICEF also participated in the development of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration module of the Inter-agency Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards for children.

50. *Demobilization and rehabilitation/reintegration of child soldiers*. One critical area of contribution towards international peace and security is the demobilization and rehabilitation/reintegration of child soldiers. UNICEF is involved in such activities through its Child Protection Section in various countries. For instance, the Special Project for the Demobilization, Social Reintegration and Prevention of Recruitment of Child Soldiers in Burundi was designed to assist the government in the provision of assistance to demobilize child soldiers, increase awareness about the international prevention of recruitment of children and support the social and economic reintegration of all demobilized child soldiers. The project successfully facilitated the demobilization and social reintegration of some 3,000 former child combatants in the autumn of 2005. The success of the project at a social level and its early rapid response to the demobilization challenge may have been instrumental in helping to push the peace process forward.

Actions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to promote international peace and security

51. *Promoting international peace and security*. To promote international peace and security by furthering efforts to engage multi-stakeholders in the dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, UNESCO consulted with a range of current and potential partners and organizations with a view to building a broad-based and inclusive approach and to identify possibilities for joint action and partnerships. In that context, in 2005, UNESCO and the Council of Europe signed a declaration of intent on the setting up of a platform of inter-institutional cooperation for intercultural dialogue, focusing on programmes and activities in the areas of education, youth and sport, culture (heritage and creativity), communication and information.

52. New focal points within the organization and in other United Nations bodies were also identified with a view to promoting closer cooperation at the midterm

point of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010. For example, the UNESCO Culture of Peace Coordination Unit participated in the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Workshop on Transitional Justice, National Reconciliation and Building a Culture of Peace, held in Zagreb in April 2006, to develop training guidance on transitional justice, national reconciliation and building a culture of peace in a United Nations peacekeeping context.

53. *Global struggle against terrorism*. The long-term strategy of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the global struggle against terrorism, from the education perspective, has been to scale up existing programmes for strengthening the capacities of educational systems so as to integrate human rights education, internationally shared values, the elimination of stereotypes, mutual understanding, conflict prevention and critical thinking into every aspect of those systems, including the development of curriculum standards, the training of teachers and the approval of school textbooks. UNESCO has also been actively participating in the United Nations Secretary-General's Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force as a follow-up to the 2005 World Summit Outcome document with a view to strengthening the United Nations system's capacity and coordination to assist States in combating terrorism.

Global Alliance of Civilizations

54. In September 2005, the Secretary-General of the United Nations created a High-level Group in order to articulate and prepare measures for an Alliance of Civilizations. The High-level Group aims at fostering better intercultural understanding through concrete actions to bridge divides and overcome prejudice, misconceptions and misperceptions, in particular between Islamic and Western societies. Its report is to be submitted to the Secretary-General before the end of 2006. UNESCO has contributed to the deliberations of the Group by providing it with detailed information on the organization's orientations and current activities to promote the dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples. In May 2006, the Director-General of UNESCO participated in the third High-level Group Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations, held in Dakar, where he provided detailed information on some UNESCO activities that foster greater mutual respect among different cultural and religious groups.

III. The role of civil society

55. In its resolution 60/3, the General Assembly encouraged civil society to further strengthen its efforts in furtherance of the objectives of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010. In the framework of the Decade, a short declaration on the culture of peace was adopted by the UNESCO non-governmental organization Working Group for a Culture of Peace and the Decade and presented at the annual congress of the International Conference of Non-governmental Organizations, held at UNESCO headquarters in December 2005 on "Knowledge for All, Assuring Sustainable Development".

56. To further strengthen the activities undertaken for promoting a culture of peace, including the dissemination of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a

Culture of Peace, UNESCO accorded patronage to the second International Salon for Peace Initiatives, held in Paris from 2 to 4 June 2006, and participated in the event, which was attended by nearly 13,000 visitors. Visitors had the opportunity to meet and get involved with organizations that are promoting a culture of peace. UNESCO participation included holding an exhibition with the French National Commission on UNESCO activities to promote the culture of peace and organizing, in coordination with the French National Commission, a round table on "Promoting a Culture of Peace: How to Go Further" in order to discuss approaches to sustain action for the remaining years of the Decade.

57. The UNESCO Culture of Peace Coordination Unit will also be organizing, in October 2006, in coordination with the French National Commission and the Culture of Peace Working Group, a round table on fostering democratic citizenship. To raise awareness further about the Decade, the Unit will also organize, in coordination with the Secretariat of the Education for Peace Prize, events to celebrate the International Day of Peace, on 21 September 2006.

IV. Communication and networking arrangements

58. The Culture of Peace Coordination Unit continued to collect and disseminate information on contributions to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) through the culture of peace website that was established during the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000) and through related Listserve. The UNESCO culture of peace website serves as a rallying point for Decade activities and as a "resource centre", with tools that enable actors to better promote the culture of peace.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

59. **Member States are encouraged to do the following:**

- **Ratify UNESCO legal instruments for the protection of cultural heritage, with particular emphasis on capacity-building, training and awareness-building strategies so that all peoples and nations can preserve their cultural heritage and traditions in a national and international atmosphere of peace, tolerance and mutual respect**
- **Increase educational efforts to develop curriculums, textbooks and activities that teach cultural and religious tolerance, ways of resolving conflicts peacefully, human rights and active citizenship**
- **Promote the objectives of the Decade through activities at the local, national and international levels and take the necessary steps to ensure that political and legal systems, institutions, organizations and practices are more participatory so that they do not marginalize, exclude or discriminate against certain sectors of society**
- **Observe 21 September as the International Day of Peace, a day of global ceasefire and non-violence, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/282**

- **Ensure access to communication and information technologies for marginalized communities in order to close the digital divide and to ensure the free flow of ideas so that all cultures and peoples have the ability to express themselves and to make themselves known**

- **Urge the media at the international and national levels to support the global campaign for a culture of peace as well as the dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples.**

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